47. The present deplorable condition of the agricultural classes and some measures for their uplift.

Mr. K. G. Thomas (Member, Nominated) said that the ryots of Travancore were suffering from several difficulties owing to constant failure of crops, lack of good manures, absence of associations and committees to inform the Government of their grievances, want of adequate capital, etc. He urged the need for the education of agricultural statistics. He also suggested the following remedial measures:—

(1) that a Ryots' Association be organised in all taluks with a central association known as "The All Travancore Ryots' Association";

(2) that some special arrangements be made to ascertain the causes for failure of crops and to collect agricultural statistics;

(3) that a Provident Fund be instituted to assist the ryots during seasons of failure of crops;

(4) that some measures be adopted to enable the ryots to secure good manures by the opening of a bone factory for the manufacture of bone manure;

(5) that the rules relating to the grant of agricultural loans be modified with a view to enable the poor to secure loans easily and that the rate of interest on agricultural loans be reduced;

(6) that Government might be pleased to afford some relief to the ryots by compensating them for a portion of the loss sustained by them in 1098 and 1099 owing to failure of crops;

(7) that more funds be placed at the disposal of the Agricultural Department; and

(8) that Experimental Agricultural Farms be opened in every village to demonstrate to the ryots the methods of scientific cultivation.

The last point dealt with by the Member related to the system of surveying encroachments. He pointed out that the officers engaged in that work were committing grave atrocities causing irreparable loss to the landholders.

President's reply.—Your suggestion regarding the collection of agricultural statistics as well as the allotment of increased funds for the Agricultural Department are noted.

In regard to the establishment of a bone factory, the Director of Agriculture says that, unlike in European countries where meat is largely used, the supply here is very limited, and so the idea is not a feasible one. The Managing Agents of the Travancore Sugars, Ltd., have agreed to open a Bone Crushing Factory for the preparation of bone manure as an annexé to their Sugar Refinery, when that industry gets into working order.

In regard to your suggestion to reduce the rate of interest for agricultural loans, I may say that the Government pay interest for the Debenture Loan raised by them at the rate of 5 per cent. The matter will, however, be noted for consideration.

Your remaining suggestions are also noted for consideration.

48. Concessions for the development of the Fish Industry.

Mr. K. Velayudhan (Member, Nominated) began by expressing the loyalty of the Araya community towards His Highness the Maha Raja and to the Royal Family and represented that greater facilities might be afforded for the development of fish trade by finding markets for Travancore fish in and outside India. While on that subject, the Member explained how the fluctuations in the market conditions in Burma and other places and the malpractices of commission agents in Burma adversely affected fish trade in Travancore and made pointed reference to the heavy loss sustained by the fisherfolk, especially those living in places to the north of Quilon who were engaged in prawn trade. He thought that the loss was due to the ignorance of the fisherfolk about suitable markets for that commodity. He therefore

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suggested the appointment of a committee, composed of an official member from the Fisheries Department and two non-official members from the fishermen community, to find suitable markets for Travancore fish and to formulate a scheme for making fish trade more profitable.

The Member's next representation was that more help might be given to the Co-operative Societies belonging to fishermen to conduct fish trade on co-operative lines. He pointed out the need for rendering financial aid to fishermen by granting loans to them for purchasing nets and other fishing implements and suggested the desirability of providing funds under 'Fishery loans' in the annual budgets of the Fisheries Department for distribution to fishermen in the shape of loans through their Co-operative Societies.

The Member then spoke on the desirability of appointing a separate Co-operative Inspector to advise fishermen in managing and organising Co-operative Societies.

He next represented that, owing to the nature of their calling and their poverty, fishermen were kept aloof by the other communities, and that to safeguard their rights they might be allowed representation in the Village Panchayats when the Village Panchayat Bill became law.

Lastly, the Member referred to the need of opening more fish-curing yards. He pointed out that five out of the eight fish-curing yards in existence were located in places to the south of Trivandrum, while there were only three to the north of it. The Member therefore urged that more yards be opened to the north of Trivandrum, especially at Purakkad in the Ambalapuzha taluk. The Member said that it would greatly help the fishermen if arrangements could be made to issue salt to them for curing purposes through their Co-operative Societies.

President's reply.—With regard to the finding of markets for Travancore fish, I may tell the Member for his information that Burma, the Straits Settlements, Ceylon and the adjoining Tamil Districts in the Madras Presidency are the principal markets for the fish exported from this country. Your suggestion to find additional markets is noted.

Your request for the allotment of a special fund for the grant of loans to those engaged in the fish industry is noted.

I may state that there are now 17 Co-operative Societies for Arayans, 12 for Valans and 13 for Coast Christians. You say that a special Co-operative Inspector to advise fishermen may be appointed. The Chief Inspector of the Co-operative Department has been appointed by the Government for attending to the work of organizing new societies.

When the Village Panchayat Bill becomes Law, your request to nominate representatives of the member's community to local Village Panchayats will be considered.

As regards fish-curing yards, there are 8 of them now and Government are contemplating to open 2 more. The Director of Agriculture says that there are no records to show that there is any necessity to open a fish-curing yard at Purakkad. Now that the necessity has been brought to notice, the question of opening a yard at Purakkad will also be considered.

Your suggestions for affording further help to Arayans are noted.

49. Concessions to Co-operative Societies.

Mr. C. Krishnan Vaidyan (Member, Nominated) began by making certain general observations regarding the utility of the co-operative movement and the methods by which that movement might be developed. He suggested means for educating the public in the principles of co-operation, such as the inclusion of lessons in co-operation in text books, distribution of leaflets, delivery of public lectures, etc.

The Member next represented that the Mayyanad Co-operative Society, Ltd., No. 44, of which he was the Secretary, had applied for certain *puduval* lands in Pattanapuram taluk and requested that those lands might be registered in the name of that society.

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